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ENG 3005-002: Technical Report Writing

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Texts and Materials
---Anderson. *Technical Communication: A Reader-Centered Approach*
---3.5" high density computer disks (IBM compatible)
---e-mail account from EIU

Course Objectives
This course is designed to help you develop professional communication skills. The following are our three main course objectives:

1. To familiarize you with some of the kinds of writing that you will do professionally and to give you practice developing these kinds of documents.
2. To help you produce professional documents that are clear, concise, and effective.
3. To help you learn to analyze audiences and to recognize and use conventional styles of written and oral presentation for specialists and non-specialists.

To succeed in this course, you must be willing to work independently on individual and group projects. Some important skills you will develop throughout the semester are as follows:

1. Working independently and in groups to meet a deadline.
2. Critiquing and editing your own writing and that of others.
3. Using research methods and materials effectively.

Policies
---The English Department statement on plagiarism stipulates that any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism---"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author and representation of them as one's original work" *(Random House Dictionary of the English Language)*---has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of NC for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.

---Hand assignments in on time. If you're having problems, let me know. Assignments a week or more late will not be accepted at all. If you miss an exam, you have only one week in which to make it up, and it will not be the same exam given in class.

---All assignments must be prepared to look professional. Word-processing is required for all work. Documents should be printed on laser printers or very high quality ink jet printers. Messy printing, errors in proofreading, incorrect formats, and poor page
design will substantially reduce grades. Unless otherwise noted, assignments should be double-spaced with standard one-inch margins.

--If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

--Be prepared for class. You'll get a lot more out of class discussions and group work if you are participating in them, and I'll notice if you do not seem prepared to participate.

Note
Dates of assignments, presentations, and syllabus content may be subject to change as the semester progresses. We will be sharing the computer classroom with another class; therefore, we will be in there on alternating weeks.

Requirements
General Assignments 30%
Exams 1 & 2 20%
Report/Proposal 20%
Instructions 20%
Individual Oral Reports 10%

Plan of Work
Note: This course will be run as a workshop. Some days we will be in the computer classroom; other days we will be in the regular classroom. We will adjust our class activities accordingly; therefore, this plan of work is tentative regarding the dates of activities scheduled.

Tentative Schedule
T. Jan. 9—Introduction to course. Read ch. 1 carefully.
Th. Jan. 11—Discussion: differences between academic and technical writing. Read chapters on Reports and Proposals.

T. Jan. 16—Introduction to major assignments. Examine student examples. Brainstorm potential topics and bring a list of three possibilities for major project #1 to class next time. For each possible topic, describe 1) the idea, 2) your familiarity with the topic, 3) the professional scenario, including your position as the writer, your business or organization, and the potential audience(s) for this document. Read chs. 3 and 4.
Th. Jan. 18—In class, each student will present his or her three topic ideas for general discussion. Do audience analysis exercise from ch. 3.

T. Jan. 23—Internet assignment—due tomorrow.
Th. Jan. 25—Write formal proposal memo for your major assignment #1. Due next class.

T. Jan. 30—Turn in proposals for the project.
Th. Feb. 1—Work on report or proposal. Read chapters 11 and 12.
T. Feb. 6—Work on report or proposal.
Th. Feb. 8—Work on progress report and annotated bibliography. Due next class. Read chapter 18 on oral communication.

T. Feb. 13—Discuss oral presentations
Th. Feb. 15—Conferences: bring full drafts

T. Feb. 20—Conferences: bring full drafts
Th. Feb. 22—Review for Exam 1

T. Feb. 27—Exam 1
Th. Mar. 1—Oral Presentations

T. Mar. 6—Oral Presentations
Th. Mar. 8—Oral Presentations

T. Mar. 13—Spring Break
Th. Mar. 15—Spring Break

T. Mar. 20—Finished reports and proposals are due. Read ch. 2.
Th. Mar. 22—Examine samples of resumes and letters. Work on your own resumes and letters. Find an advertisement for a job in your field or that you are qualified for, and target your resume and letters accordingly. When this project is finished, you will turn in the job description along with your resume and the two letters. Bring job description and drafts of your documents to next class.

T. Mar. 27—Groups: peer critique of letters and resumes. Select one case to present to the class. Have one group member describe the job opportunity, one or two present the resume and letters, and one ask the job applicant potential interview questions invented by the group. Final, polished letters and resumes are due next class. Turn in your case letters and resume (to my box or to me during office hours) before class next time so that I can have transparencies made for your presentations. Also—Bring a brainstormed list of 3 instructions or procedures topics that you would like to work with for the next major assignment.
Th. Mar. 29—Group presentations. Discuss major project #2, instructions/procedures. For general discussion, each student will present his or her 3 possible topics for instructions. Bring to class samples of instructions that you have briefly critiqued according to the instructions superstructure.

T. Apr. 3—In class, go over samples of instructions and critique.
Th. Apr. 5—Do exercise for beginning instructions. Discuss visual aids. Groups—brainstorm approaches to visual aids for your first choice for the instructions project.
T. Apr. 10—Conferences. Work on instructions.
Th. Apr. 12—Conferences. Work on instructions.

T. Apr. 17—Oral presentations. Instructions due.
Th. Apr. 19—Oral presentations

T. Apr. 24—Oral presentations.
Th. Apr. 26—Exam Two